



Birth Spacing

It Takes a Village: Giving Our Babies the Best Chance

What is Birth Spacing?

- “The amount of time between the birth of one baby and the beginning of the next pregnancy.”¹



Did you know?

- 37% of Pacific Islander pregnancies are spaced 18 months apart or less.²
- 11% of Pacific Islander pregnancies are spaced 6 months apart or less (almost 3x higher than the rest of Utah).²



Ancient or Modern? Science or Culture?

- Health professionals recommend that mothers wait 18 months after birth to allow their bodies to fully recuperate.¹
- Our Pacific Islander culture and history actually teaches us that our ancestors already knew this was a good practice.



Birth Spacing is Cultural

- Samoan mothers waited “at least two years between the birth of each child.”³
- Hawaiian mothers stopped breastfeeding when their child was able to pick up and throw a stone, 18-20 months.⁴
- It was universal practice in the Pacific Islands for a husband and wife to abstain during the 1 – 2 years that a child was being nursed.



Birth Spacing is Cultural

- In the Pacific, the spacing of the planting time of crops in the *fonua* or *fanua* (land) was a common cultural practice, which allowed the *fonua* or *fanua* (land) to recover.⁵
- Birth spacing gives a mother the opportunity to recover and develop and strengthen her *fonua* or *fanua* (placenta, womb, and nurturing environment).



Birth Spacing is Cultural

- Birth spacing gives mothers the opportunity to invest quality time with their new baby.
- This develops and strengthens the *kaliloa* or *'aliloa* or her influence on the child throughout the child's life.



References

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